

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
File No. 8. REGISTRY.

SECTION 2

No. D-5390
Date 7/1/34

REPORT

Date November 6, 1934

Subject (in full) V. A. Yakhontoff, author of the book entitled "The Chinese Soviets".
Made by D.S.I. Prokofiev. Forwarded by J.S. Rm

With reference to the endorsement of the Deputy Commissioner (Special Branch) on the attached copy of "The PEOPLE'S TRIBUNE" dated November 1, 1934, I have to state that V.A. Yakhontoff, author of the book, reference to which is made in the article entitled "Fiction About Communism" appearing in the above mentioned publication, forms the subject of file D-5390 in connection with his pro-Soviet leanings.

The book in question entitled "The Chinese Soviets" is on sale at the Chinese American Publishing Co., 78 Nanking Road, where another book by the same author, entitled "Russia and the Soviet Union in the Far East", is also available.

A. Prokofiev
D.S.I.

Deputy Commissioner,
Special Branch.

File
NAG

*X. Copy detached
for filing
in '5.3.
(M. Cook)*

See also

JR

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE
C. & S. B. REGISTRY.

REPORT

No. D
SECTION 2
Date

Date November 1, 1933

Subject (in full) Departure of V.A. Yakhontoff, Alleged Soviet Agent.

Made by D.S. Prokofiev

Forwarded by

D.S. Prokofiev

V.A. Yakhontoff, who forms the subject of file D.5390, left Shanghai for Seattle on October 31, 1933 by the s.s. "President Jefferson".

D.S. Prokofiev
D.S.

md
Officer i/c Special Branch.

Mr Yao

Please send a further note to parties named

*copies of both reports sent to
Messrs. Clapton, McHugh, Lally,
Capt. Secker, Lieut. Comdr. Hopkinson
+ Chinese authorities.*

File
[Signature]

J. Yao
3/11/33

SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE.

File No.

REPORT

Special Branch S. 2. *S. 2. 1/1/44*

Date October 31, 1933.

Subject (in full) V. A. Yakhontoff, alleged Soviet agent.

Made by D.S. Prokofiev

Forwarded by *D.S. Prokofiev*

With reference to the attached translation of article from the "Mainichi" dated October 28, 1933, on the subject of a Russian named "Yapon Koff," who is alleged to be a Soviet agent, I have to state that the article evidently refers to V.A. Yakhontoff who arrived in Shanghai from Harbin on September 27, 1933. He stayed at the Astor House until October 19 when he left for Japan by the s.s. "Nagasaki Maru." On October 24 he returned in the s.s. "Asama Maru" and is at present residing at the Astor House, Room 85.

Particulars of this individual, as known to this office, are as follows :-

Victor Alexeevitch Yakhontoff, Russian, 52 years of age, native of Warsaw. He holds passport No. 4967 issued by the German Consulate-General at New York on June 3, 1933 which bears a visa issued by the Chinese Consulate-General at that city on June 28, 1933. In explanation of his national status he stated that he was a former Russian, and that he was very soon to become a naturalized citizen of the U.S.A., having already taken out his first papers. He gave his address as No. 552 Riverside Drive, New York, and his profession as that of a "lecturer and writer on foreign affairs." Further he stated that the object in his coming to Shanghai was "to see several members of the China Institute of Pacific Relations" and mentioned Messrs. L.T. Chen and Liu Yu Wan of the said Institute as references.

Following Yakhontoff's return from Japan on October 24, rumours spread in Shanghai to the effect that he had been refused permission to land in Japan on the ground that he was a Soviet agent. The rumours culminated in the publishing by the "Mainichi" on October 28, of the article above referred to. The article was

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followed by Yakhontoff's letter to the Editor of the "China Press" which appeared on October 29 (copy attached).

During the early part of ^{the} current month a lengthy article which had appeared in the "Harbin Times," a Japanese semi-official newspaper published in the Russian language in Harbin, was reprinted by the local Russian newspaper "Slovo." It appears from the article that Yakhontoff arrived at the Manchuli Station from the U.S.S.R. on September 17. An examination of his luggage by the customs and police officers revealed a quantity of Soviet publications which were banned in Manchukuo. The literature was confiscated. The fact that Yakhontoff, formerly a general in the Russian Army, had travelled unmolested through the U.S.S.R. on a passport issued by the German Consulate at New York, was also much commented upon. In this connection, according to "Harbin Times", it is mentioned that Yakhontoff took part in the preparation of the revolution in Russia in February 1917, on instruction of certain American circles, and that for this purpose he joined the Russian Socialist Revolutionary Party. Under Kerensky's regime he made a rapid career and was promoted to the rank of general. Following the Bolshevik revolution in October 1917 he was taken prisoner by the Red Army, but managed to escape death, and with the permission of the Soviet government left the U.S.S.R. for America via Vladivostock. While in America he resided in New York where he organized conferences on Russian affairs. During the first period of his activity he did not openly express his pro-Soviet attitude owing to the hostile feeling which existed in America against the U.S.S.R. at that time. From America he visited Berlin on several occasions where he was in touch with certain circles connected with Moscow. In Berlin he was involved in an

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obscure affair in connection with Soviet counterfeit banknotes, as a result of which he had to leave Germany. He returned to America and soon became known there as the author of books on foreign affairs, a lecturer in colleges and a collaborator of the Political Research Institute in New York. His books, ostensibly of non-communist nature, contained a subtle propaganda of Soviet ideas. The popularization of the Soviet Five Years Plan in the American business circles was one of the services he rendered to the U.S.S.R. He published a number of books on the "proletarian" country, eulogising, under the mask of impartiality, the much discussed "achievements" of the Soviet Government in the U.S.S.R. The fact that a "Tsarist general" praised the Soviet regime strongly impressed the American society and facilitated the propaganda conducted by the Soviet Trade Mission in 1930-1931. The naive Americans did not know that all data for his books and lectures Yakhontoff received direct from Skvirsky, Soviet representative in America, with whom he was connected. In this manner Yakhontoff became prominent as a responsible worker of the pro-Soviet group in America, which includes Senator Bora, Abel Jenkins and others, ^{and} the activity of which is directed towards the support of the U.S.S.R. Yakhontoff claims to have been charged by a certain publishing company with the task of collecting materials relating to the Soviet movement in China. It would be logical for him to go to China in order to accomplish his task. Instead, he went to the U.S.S.R. where he remained for some considerable time and where he received a large quantity of the Soviet publications. It is said that in Moscow, apart from collecting materials relating to the Soviet movement in China, he was in touch with the Red General Staff, of which he is a member

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in addition to his duties in America.

Yakhontoff's letter to the Editor of the "China Press", apart from allegations regarding the inquisitiveness of the Japanese police and their "White Russian collaborators", which may or may not be true, contains corroboration of the above report of the "Harbin Times" regarding his revolutionary career and the circumstances under which he arrived at the Manchuli Station. At the same time it does not explain the circumstances under which he left Russia following the Bolshevist revolution, and how it was possible for a former general of the Russian army, who is an emigrant, not only to travel unmolested through the U.S.S.R., but to be allowed to conduct a party of English and American tourists in that country. It would seem that the Soviet government has a certain amount of confidence in Yakhontoff and that, therefore, the Japanese police had good reasons for their distrust towards this individual.

According to our information Yakhontoff intends to leave Shanghai for the United States within a few days.

A. Prokofiev

D. S.

Officer i/c Special Branch.

Ind
11/11

[Signature]

NOV. 1924

30.16.12

STRANGE RUSSIAN RETURNS TO SHANGHAI

Suspicion was aroused owing to his strange activities when staying at the Astor House and the Japanese Consular authorities sent a telegram to the Kobe Water Police instructing them to make an investigation. Acting upon these instructions, the Kobe Water Police made a search of articles belonging to him and found a quantity of inflammatory documents. Consequently he was not permitted to disembark. He returned to Shanghai on October 24 by the S.S. Asama Maru. He is reported to be a communist.

OVER ONE THOUSAND RUSSIANS LEAVE HARBIN

\$2.17 For comment please
JH

OCT 29 1933

Dr. Pinarofier *[Signature]*
30/10/17

October 28, 1933.

Morning Translation, 33

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|---------------------------|
| SHANGHAI MUNICIPAL POLICE |
| C & S. B. REGISTRY. |
| No. D 5390 |
| Morning Translation, 33 |

MISCELLANEOUS

MAINICHI

STRANGE RUSSIAN RETURNS TO SHANGHAI

D 5390

A Russian named Yapon Koff, 52, who was a cavalry officer in the time of the Russian Empire, came to Shanghai some time ago and was collecting secret information by employing a number of informers. He stayed at the Astor House. A few days ago he suddenly left for Japan. He is of Russian origin and a naturalized German. He is in possession of a German passport issued two years ago but the passport has now expired.

Suspicion was aroused owing to his strange activities when staying at the Astor House and the Japanese Consular authorities sent a telegram to the Kobe Water Police instructing them to make an investigation. Acting upon these instructions, the Kobe Water Police made a search of articles belonging to him and found a quantity of inflammatory documents. Consequently he was not permitted to disembark. He returned to Shanghai on October 24 by the S.S. Asama Maru. He is reported to be a communist.

YAKHONTOFF, Victor Alexeevitch

Author of "The Chinese Soviets".

Address: No. 552 Riverside Drive, New York.

Came to Shanghai "to see several members of the China
Institute of Pacific Relations"

Was collaborator of the Political Research Institute in New York.

Aided Soviet Trade Mission in 1930-1931.

SMP

SMP: No. D 5390
7 Nov. 1934

SKVIRSKY

Soviet representative in America.

KOFF, Yapon - Soviet